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ABSTRACT

Knowledge of leadership is an important consideration for both teacher preparation and performance, and effectiveness in both areas can be improved through an understanding of the relationship between the dynamics of the classroom social system and the leadership style (motivation) of the teacher, and the conditions under which they meet. Leadership style, as determined by a Least Preferred Co-Worker (LPC) Scale Test, can be divided into two types: relationship motivated and task motivated. The first type is interested in good relationships with people and encourages group members to participate and to offer different ideas. The second type finds the task very important and a poor co-worker as an obstacle who may prevent task accomplishment. Components of the leadership situation involve leader-member relations, task structure, and position power. If leadership styles do not match the situation, it is best to modify one of the three components of the situation, i.e., modify level of rapport with students, select different procedures or structures, or modify authoritarian (or shared decision making) mode. Learning how to adjust will improve teacher leadership and effectiveness. (DS)

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Analyzing and Modifying your Classroom Leadership Style

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Introduction

In all professions, especially teaching, one of the main considerations is helping others whether by guiding children towards adulthood, teaching basic skills, or helping others to achieve their own potential. In education the goals remain similar only the medium is different.

People involved in teaching need to be able to provide leadership not only to their students, but to peers, administrators, and community residents. This implies that knowledge of leadership is an important consideration in both the preparation of teachers and in the performance of classroom teachers at all levels.

The quality of leadership determines the success or failure of any organization. For the purposes of this paper the school is considered an organization and is viewed as a series of social systems which are contained within the school. (Figure 1) The teacher then enters this social system as one who is organizationally appointed and for our purpose is regarded as an agent of the organization and, therefore, responsible for and "in charge" of goal attainment and task prescription.

Leadership, then, is part of an extremely complex relationship based upon interaction between leader and follower. Without a follower there is no leader. Members of a group (students) let one person, the leader, (teacher) make certain decisions and judgments in order to accomplish group tasks (learning). Leadership can only be

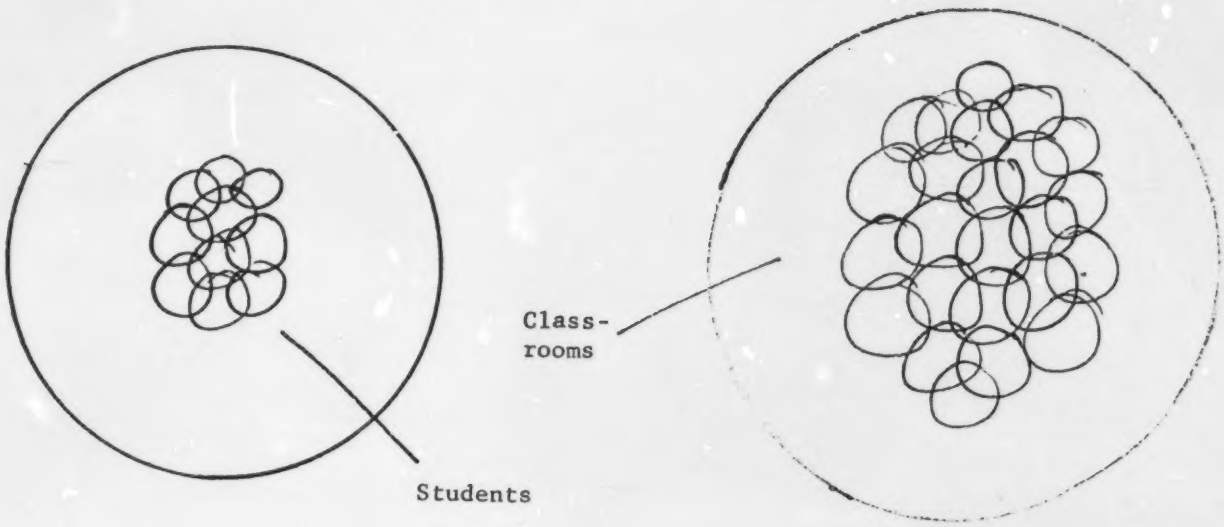
Class-
rooms
Students
Classroom, Social System
Series of classrooms
which form the school

Figure 1.

exercised effectively when people want to reach a common goal. A leader's effectiveness, depends not only upon preparation, and the person, but also on the group members and the conditions under which they meet.

Leadership has many different meanings. Stogdill (1974), in fact, suggests over 500 definitions. An influence process and some degree of task accomplishment would always seem to be implied in any definition of the term. It is this aspect which will be the focus of our attention. Specifically, the leader's style and the amount of control and influence that the leader has over the group, the task, and the outcome. We will begin to look at your leadership style within the context of situational control or in the jargon of social psychology "situational favorableness."

In order to identify your leadership style, which can be expressed as personality or in terms of what motivates you, the following scale is provided in Appendix A. Follow the directions and complete this scale.

Leadership Style

The score helps to identify two main leadership styles.

- Scores of 64 and above are considered as high LPC persons or relationship motivated.
- Scores of 57 and below are considered as low LPC persons or task motivated.

Your score is a measure of your leadership style. It tells something about your basic goals in the educational or leadership setting.

The person who has a low LPC score describes the least preferred co-worker in very negative terms, rejecting terms such as unfriendly, uncooperative or cold. In effect the low LPC person finds the task very important and a poor co-worker as an obstacle who may prevent task accomplishment. Therefore, little positive is said about this person. For this reason the low LPC leader is called task motivated.

The high LPC leader regards the task as important, but not so important that the high LPC person rejects the least preferred co-worker as an individual. This person is interested in good relationships with other people. For this reason the high LPC leader is called relationship motivated.

The group with scores between 57 and 63 are not clearly relationship or task motivated. Many people in this group tend to have a mix of motivation and goals and are, therefore, difficult to classify. In general, we expect the mean score for any group to whom the LPC is administered to fall within the 57 to 63 range. The single reported exception is (Keane 1976) where the mean for university athletic coaches was reported to be 48. This would seem to support the notion that coaches are a rather task-oriented group.

Whatever your score, research would suggest that both high and low LPC people are very effective in situations which match their styles. Neither type is outstanding in all situations. Again the importance of the blend of person and situation must be stressed.

At this point it may be beneficial to describe "typical" behaviors of persons who score high and low on the LPC scale. The Relationship-Motivated Leader (LPC score 64 and above) derives major satisfaction

from good personal relations with others. Their self-esteem depends a great deal upon how other people, (students) regard them and relate to them. This person encourages group members to participate and to offer different ideas. They do not usually get upset when things are complicated and they like creative problem-solving situations.

However, as you know, we do not behave the same way in all situations. Some people become withdrawn or shy when they are insecure, others become bossy and noisy. Some people handle stressful situations by reamining calm and self-controlled, while others tend to fall apart. Some respond to stress by throwing themselves into the problems at hand, while others seek encouragement and support from other teachers, students, parents, etc. We should, then, learn to recognize how we behave when everything is under control, and how we behave in an uncertain, uncontrolled situation. This is critical when attempting to understand leadership and interaction.

Situational Control

In terms of situational control, relationship-motivated leaders (LPC score 64 and above) may be viewed in:

(a) Low Control Situation. High LPC leader looks for support from class members. They are considerate of feelings, non-punitive, and concerned for the welfare of the group. The high LPC leader may, thus, pay less attention to the task because of seeking support and fail to accomplish the task. In an extremely stressful situation, the high LPC leader may withdraw from the leadership position and not give the direction which the groups needs.

(b) Moderate Control Situation. Here the high LPC leader is really in his element. The situation is just uncertain enough to be a challenge, yet not so uncertain as to make him lose sight of the task. The concern for feelings enables him to develop support for task accomplishment. The leader is able to work around conflict by being tactful and sensitive to problems before they become damaging to task performance.

(c) High Control Situation. Here the high LPC leader may feel bored and unchallenged. Some high LPC leaders become very involved in details and organization. Too much control is frequently the result of becoming stricter, and concerned with discipline and more heavy handed in all matters. This person, in fact, may appear bossy. Some may seek to impress by giving lots of orders and by highly structuring all tasks. As a consequence, teacher/leader performance tends to suffer.

In terms of situational control, the task motivated leader (LPC score of 57 or below) may be viewed in:

(a) Low Control Situations. Here the task and its accomplishment are paramount. The principle concern is control of the group and opinions and feelings mean little. This leader may appear harsh and punishing in the need to complete the task. These people are likely to be no-nonsense, take charge types, who enjoy strict organization. In meetings

and class they tend to move in and get down to business. They quickly assign tasks, establish schedules and check on progress. They typically are not liked, but are often respected.

(b) Moderate Control Situation. Here the low LPC leader tends to be least effective. These situations are regarded as difficult and stressful. They will again choose task completion over dealing with the needs of the group. They cannot deal with conflict and are often regarded as showing a lack of concern.

(c) High Control Situation. Here when they know the job will get done, they tend to relax and to consider feelings. They are pleasant and considerate. Unlike high LPC leaders, they are not bored when things go well. In this situation they tend to take the opportunity to learn more about the group and about how to accomplish the task even better. They also tend to resent interference from superiors. It can, should, and must be said, that low LPC people can be as well liked as high LPC people and that they do not necessarily have poor personal relations with group members.

The underlying basis for classifying a leadership situation is the degree to which it provides leaders with control and influence. This means the extent to which leaders can determine what their group is going to be. It also means the leader can predict, with a high degree of certainty and assurance, what will happen when he wants something to

be done.

Components of the Leadership Situation

Three components of the leadership situation are suggested Fiedler and Chemers (1974), these are:

(a) Leader member relations: The degree to which the group supports the leader.

(b) Task structure: The degree to which the leader clearly spells out goals, procedures, guidelines, etc.

(c) Position power: The degree to which the position gives the leader authority to reward and/or to punish.

These dimensions can be combined in various ways to describe the amount of situational control in any leadership position.

The leadership situation is subsequently divided into three areas: high control, moderate control, low control.

Leader-member relations is the most important single element in situational control. If you have the group's support then you need not depend upon position power, or task structure to get cooperation. This situation is, therefore, likely to result in either high or moderate control in any school environment.

A factor in this relationahip is support received from the administration. If your decisions are supported you are likely to be held in high esteem by group members.

The second most important dimension concerns task structure. Some tasks or assignments are spelled out in considerable detail and in a way which allows little or no deviation. Others require creativity, decision making, and do not have a specific format. This is the most complex

of the three dimensions of situational control.

The third element of situational control is position power. This is the power which the organization has vested in you for the purpose of goal accomplishment. Suffice it to say, after a great deal of reflection, the public school educator is in a relatively low power position. The issue here is not how much clout you have, but rather, can you accomplish your tasks or assignments. Position power is the least important aspect of situational control This is supported by the notion that no matter how much power you have you hardly ever, if ever, force an outcome such as learning.

Leader-member relations is evaluated on a forty point scale, twice as many points as task structure and four times as much as position power.

Leader-members relations - Appendix B.

In general, a score of 30 or above indicates good leader-member relations, a score of 20-30 indicates moderate leader-member relations and a score below 20 indicates poor leader-member relations.

Task structure - Appendix C

Task structure is scored as follows: A score of 6 or below is low in structure, a score between 7-13 is medium in structure and a score of 14 or above is high in task structure. It should be mentioned here that the task structure score can be effected by both training and experience. It is possible and desirable to consider this aspect of task structure in some situation.

Position power - Appendix D

Position power may be envisioned as the line between maintaining member support and meeting the demands of the organization.

A score of 7-10 indicates high position power, a score of 4-6 shows moderate position power and a score of 3 or below denotes low position power.

Complete the situational control score at Appendix E

Modifying your Own Leadership Situation

You may find yourself in situations which do not match your leadership style. When this happens you have two choices: (1) change your leadership style or personality, (2) modify your leadership situation.

The premise is advanced that it is much easier to change your situation than to change your style. The implication here is that the situation can be "engineered" by modification of the three components of the situation.

Leader-member relations may be effected by:

- more or less informal time spent with students
- organize some non-creative activities with your students
- use more or less group work
- increase or decrease your availability to students

Modification in this area may be placed under the rubric of rapport.

Task structure may be effected by:

- more or less procedure, guidelines, etc.
- selection of structured and/or unstructured tasks
- use of feedback which is specific to the conditions and standards under which the task is performed

Position power may be effected by:

- teaching in a commanding or authoritarian mode or not.
- use shared decision making

- use of small groups

- allowing students to be responsible for parts of instruction

The obvious intent of engineering of the situation is to better meet the cognitive, affective and psycho-motor need of students through modification of your leadership style. The classroom or educational situation is often more flexible than we usually realize. Learning how to adjust to the factors of situation will improve teacher leadership in the classroom and, therefore, an improvement in student learning can be expected. The concept is not new and Flanders (1970) has advocated such an approach in his discussion of teacher flexibility and variability within the classroom.

Summary

This paper deals with the premise that teacher-classroom leadership effectiveness can be improved, changed and/or shaped by understanding the relationship between the dynamics of the classroom social system and the leadership style (motivation) of the teacher and the conditions under which they meet.

As research proceeds in the area of teacher behavior and teaching effectiveness in the classroom, mounting evidence would seem to indicate that leadership is a significant, although often ignored, variable in the behavior of those who are most influential in the education process - the teachers.

Appendix A

INSTRUCTIONS

Throughout your life you have worked in many groups with a wide variety of different people - on your job, in social groups, in church organizations, in volunteer groups, on athletic teams, and in many other situations. Some of your co-workers may have been very easy to work with. Working with others may have been all but impossible.

Of all the people with whom you have ever worked, think of the one person now or at any time in the past with whom you could work least well. This individual is not necessarily the person you liked least well. Rather think of the one individual with whom you could work least well. This person is called your Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC).

On the scale below, describe this person by placing an "X" in the appropriate space. The scale consists of pairs of words which are opposite in meaning, such as Very Neat and Very Untidy. Between each pair of words are eight spaces which form the following scale:

Very Neat									Very Untidy
	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	

Think of those eight spaces as steps which range from one extreme to the other. Thus, if you ordinarily think this least preferred co-worker is quite neat, write an "X" in the space marked 7, like this:

Very Neat									Very Untidy
	8	X 7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
	Very Neat	Quite Neat	Some-what Neat	Slight-ly Neat	Slight-ly Neat	Some-what Neat	Quite Un-tidy	Very Un-tidy	

However, if you ordinarily think of this person as being only slightly neat, you would put your "X" in space 5. If you think of this person as being very untidy (not neat), you would put your "X" in space 1.

Sometimes the scale will run in the other direction, as shown below:

Frustrating ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ Helpful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Before you mark your "X" look at the words at both ends of the line. There are no right or wrong answers. Work rapidly; your first answer is likely to be the best. Do not omit any items, and mark each item only once. Ignore the scoring column for now.

Now go to the next page and describe the person with whom you can work least well.

LEAST PREFERRED CO-WORKER (LPC) SCALE

										SCORING
Pleasant	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Unpleasant	
Friendly	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Unfriendly	
Rejecting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Accepting	
Tense	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Relaxed	
Distant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Close	
Cold	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Warm	
Supportive	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Hostile	
Boring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Interesting	
Quarrelsome	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Harmonious	
Gloomy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Cheerful	
Open	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Guarded	
Backbiting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Loyal	
Untrustworthy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Trustworthy	
Considerate	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Inconsiderate	
Nasty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Nice	
Agreeable	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Disagreeable	
Insincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Sincere	
Kind	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Unkind	
									TOTAL	

Fiedler (1967)

Appendix B

Describe your relationship with a particular class of your choice, e.g., ist period Monday.

LEADER-MEMBER RELATIONS SCALE

Circle the number which best represents your response to each item.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. The people I teach have trouble getting along with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My students are reliable and trustworthy.	5	4	3	2	1
3. There seems to be a friendly atmosphere among the people I teach	5	4	3	2	1
4. My students always cooperate with me in getting the job done.	5	4	3	2	1
5. There is friction between my students and myself.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My students give me a good deal of help and support in getting the job done.	5	4	3	2	1
7. The people I teach work well together in getting the job done.	5	4	3	2	1
8. I have good relations with the people I teach.	5	4	3	2	1

TOTAL SCORE _____

Appendix C

TASK STRUCTURE RATING SCALE - PART I

Circle the number in the appropriate column. Consider your instruction.	Usually True	Sometimes True	Seldom True
<u>Is the Goal Clearly Stated or Known</u>?			
1. Is there a blueprint, picture, model or detailed description available of the finished product or service?	2	1	0
2. Is there a person available to advise and give a description of the finished product or service, or how the job should be done?	2	1	0
<u>Is There Only One Way to Accomplish the Task</u>?			
3. Is there a step-by-step procedure, or a standard operating procedure which indicates in detail the process which is to be followed	2	1	0
4. Is there a specific way to subdivide the task into separate parts or steps?	2	1	0
5. Are there some ways which are clearly recognized as better than other for performing this task?	2	1	0
<u>Is There Only One Correct Answer or Solution</u>?			
6. Is it obvious when the task is finished and the correct solution has been found?	2	1	0
7. Is there a book, manual, or job description which indicates the best solution or the best outcome for the task?	2	1	0
<u>Is It Easy to Check Whether the Job Was Done Right</u>?			
8. Is there a generally agreed understanding about the standards the particular product or service has to meet to be considered acceptable?	2	1	0
9. Is the evaluation of this task genrally made on some quantitive basis?	2	1	0
10. Can the leader and the group find out how well the task has been accomplished in enough time to improve future performance?	2	1	0

SUBTOTAL _____

Appendix D

POSITION POWER RATING SCALE

Circle the number which best represents your answer. Consider your position.

1. Can you directly or by recommendation administer rewards and punishments to your students?

2	1	0
Can act directly or can recommend with high effectiveness	Can recommend but with mixed results	No

2. Can you directly or by recommendation affect the status, or acceptance of students?

2	1	0
Can act directly or can recommend with high effectiveness	Can recommend but with mixed results	No

3. Do you have the knowledge necessary to assign tasks to students and instruct them in task completion?

2	1	0
Yes	Can recommend but with mixed results	No

4. Is it your job to evaluate the performance of students?

2	1	0
Yes	Sometimes or in some aspects	No

5. Has the leader been given some official title of authority by the organization (e.g., director, department head, assistant administrator)?

2	0
Yes	No

TOTAL _____

Appendix E

SITUATIONAL CONTROL SCALE

Enter the total scores for the Leader-Member Relations dimension, the Task Structure scale, and the Position Power scale in the spaces below. Add the three scores together and compare your total with the ranges given in the table below to determine your overall situational control.

1. Leader-Member Relations Total _____

2. Task Structure Total _____

3. Position Power Total _____

GRAND TOTAL _____

Total Score	51 - 70	31 - 50	10 - 30
Amount of Situational Control	High Control	Moderate Control	Low Control

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